

## THE SPOTTED SANDPIPER.

CHRESWELL J. HUNT.

Surely every bird student knows the Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*). No matter how small the body of water we visit, whether river, creek, or mill-pond, we are almost certain to find at least one pair of these little fellows at home. Visit a rapid stream dashing over rocks and gliding here and there into deep pools such as the trout love and you will hear the shrill "Peet-weet, peet-weet" of the Sandpiper as he takes wing from some point along the water's edge at your approach; or you may come upon him "teetering" upon some rock. Or visit a tide creek or river and you will find him just as much at home upon the sandy beach or upon the mud flats left by the receding tide. He also finds the quiet mill-pond much to his liking and the stream must be small indeed which may not be honored by his presence.

Although so well known generally a few observations made during the past year or two may not be amiss.

Common enough along the streams I frequent, and though one of the first birds whose acquaintance I made when I began the study of ornithology, it is still more or less of a stranger to me. We are on speaking terms and that is all. Never as yet have I been fortunate enough to discover the nest or even to receive a hint from the birds as to the nest location.

It was a hot June afternoon. I had been lying upon a log at the edge of a mill-pond watching a Kingfisher. The mid-day hush in the bird chorus was in progress and 'ere long I fell asleep. When I awakened, without moving I looked out over the water and there within only a few yards of me stood two Spotted Sandpipers. They were standing in about three inches of water and were apparently fast asleep. Each stood upon one leg. The head was turned back and the bill was hidden in the feathers of the back. They were perfectly motionless. I wondered if it was customary for these birds to sleep in this manner. Do they always sleep thus? Or were these birds simply taking a siesta?

Mr. C. J. Peck and myself spent most of the nights of May 28 and 29, 1904, in an open boat upon a New Jersey tide creek. During the early night and even at midnight we heard a strange whistle which some bird made as it flew across the marsh. It was of course too dark to see the bird, but on the following evening we heard a Spotted Sandpiper give the same note. Is this nocturnal flight common with this species? Has it anything to do with the breeding season? Is this bird astir all night? I have found them sleeping during the day and flying about at night. If they sleep at night do they sleep standing in the water or where do they roost? Can not some other bird student throw some more light upon this subject?

We always associate the Spotted Sandpiper with the vicinity of water. Whenever I think of them I imagine I can hear water rushing about rocks or see before me an expanse of mud flats. What was my surprise, therefore, when one July morning I found one of them walking the railroad tracks. To be sure it was near a trestle that spanned the creek, but here was the bird walking back and forth upon the steel rail, occasionally stopping and "teetering" in its customary way. It was a young bird of the year, lacking the conspicuous spots upon the breast. As it walked the rail the toes were turned in and it was "pigeon-toed" to perfection. I soon found, however, that there was an object in its madness as I saw it several times drop down to one of the ties and capture an unsuspecting spider, which it devoured with apparent relish.

Philadelphia, Pa., May, 1905.

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## BIRD HORIZONS FROM RUSSELLVILLE, KY.

BY G. C. EMBODY.

March 19, 1904.

Time, 2:30-5:30 P. M.; temp., 70°; clear; light south wind.

Wilson Snipe, 3; Bob-white, 15; Turkey Vulture, 10; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 2; Flicker, 10; Bronzed Grackle, 50; Vesper Sparrow, 20; Savanna Sparrow, 5; Leconte Sparrow, 1; White-crowned Sparrow, 2; White-throated Sparrow, 10; Field Sparrow, 8; Slate-colored Junco, 50; Song Sparrow, 12; Swamp Sparrow, 1; Cardinal,